

USOPC ATHLETE STIPEND SUPPORT
Criteria for 2021-2022 Consideration
AMMENDED January 6, 2021 due to the COVID-19 impact

With the unpredictability of the global COVID-19 pandemic, USS is amending the criteria to receive Athlete Stipends for the 2021-22 season. This is replacing any previous version communicated.

These amendments were created through a collaborative process between USS, USS Athlete Representatives, and the USOPC High Performance team. The main factors that stimulated the need to amend the criteria are:

- Respecting athlete's choice not to travel and compete internationally due to health and safety concerns.
- Acknowledgment that the events targeted as qualifying competitions for Athlete Stipends, may not include participation from all of the top skaters in the world.
- The challenges of hosting fair competitions with all top competitors present and able to perform at their highest level.

The intent is to provide athletes that have earned Athlete Stipends in Tier 1-3 for the 2020-21 season with similar support in 2021-22.

The Athlete Stipends support program is an elite athlete financial support program specifically designed to assist athletes in reaching the podium at the 2022 Winter Olympic Games. It requires proven competitive success, an approved training plan with set goals, regular performance reviews, team event(s) or training participation, and a commitment to the level of training required to reach the 2022 Winter Olympic Games podium as determined by US Speedskating (USS).

While the intent is to maintain the 2020-21 funding levels in 2021-22, the actual funding amount per tier is subject to USOPC annual support funding approval which should be confirmed by June 30, 2021.

COVID-19 REVIEW PANEL:

A COVID-19 Review Panel will be formed to identify athletes for Athlete Stipends for the 2021-22 season. The considerations that will be reviewed and approved by the panel:

1. Review situations where moving up a tier could be considered.
2. Review consideration of new athletes for Athlete Stipends. This may include an athlete who was identified as Emerging Elite.
3. Review whether a previously tiered athlete is executing an approved training plan with set goals, regular performance reviews, team event(s) or training participation, and are maintaining a commitment to the level of training required to reach the 2022 Winter Olympic Games podium as determined by US Speedskating (USS)

The panel will be made up of the following eight (7) individuals:

- USS Executive Director
- USS High Performance Director
- USS Long Track Program Director
- USS Short Track Program Director
- USS Board Athlete Representatives (2)
- USS USOPC AAC Athlete Representative (1)

The Review Panel will meet after the completion of the 2020-21 season to determine what tier of funding will be recommended for each athlete.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETE STIPENDS SUPPORT:

- Athlete must be a member of USS in good standing by July 1st prior to the 2021-22 season which includes agreeing to abide by the USS Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics and Safe Sport Policy.
- Athlete must be eligible to and intend to compete for Team USA at the 2022 Olympic Games.
- Athlete must agree to attend group training sessions and camps set by the Program Director.
- Athlete must participate in quarterly meetings with the Program Director, NTP Head Coach and High-Performance Director to discuss season goals and progress towards achievement of set goals. These meetings will aid USS in reporting on the progress of the athlete's pathway towards success in 2022.

REVIEW PANEL CONSIDERATIONS:

There may be situations where an athlete warrants consideration for increased support by moving up a tier, or situations where an athlete did not receive support in 2020-2021 but now may be eligible for support. The Review Panel will consider such cases and will have the discretion to approve athletes for Tier 1, 2 or 3 support or a Tier 4 extenuating circumstance.

Objective Performance Data will be used to support an athlete's potential improvement the tier system for Long Track:

- Timed Competition results from the 2019-20 and 2020-21 seasons for individual distances and Team Pursuit events:
 - All ISU Events
 - All Domestic Selection events, American Cups and Championships.
 - Official Time Trials listed on the USS or ISU calendar.

Objective Performance Data for Short Track that can be considered:

- Head-to-head competition results from:
 - The 2021 World Championship Selection Event
 - The 2021 US Championships
 - Additional head-to-head international results may be used:

- The 2021 World Championship results may be considered pending an evaluation of the competitive field.
- Potential 2020-2021 International events that may be run by the ISU.
- The 2019-2020 World Cups season results may be used.
- International Competition results from the 2019-20 and 2020-21 seasons, including as a member of a relay team event indicating a potential Olympic success through top 6 results

DEFINITION OF TIERS 1 - 4 & Emerging Elite:

Prior to COVID-19, skaters were required to obtain a specified performance result at World Championship to earn an Athlete Stipend. This year, the Review Panel will use objective data to determine whether an athlete meets the criteria below.

USS FUNDING TIER 1

Short Track (ST) athletes who are on a trajectory to place 1st - 3rd at the Olympic Winter Games in an individual distance, or Relay Team skaters that can show a trajectory to finish 1st - 3rd in the relay event(s).

Long Track (LT) athletes who are on trajectory to place 1st - 3rd at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in an individual distance, including the Mass Start, or Team Pursuit skaters that can show a trajectory to finish 1st - 3rd in the Team Pursuit event(s)

USS FUNDING TIER 2

ST athletes who are on trajectory to place 4th - 8th in an individual distance at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games.

LT athletes who are on trajectory to place 4th - 8th in an individual distance at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games, which includes the Mass Start

USS FUNDING TIER 3

ST athletes who are on trajectory to place 9th - 16th in an individual distance at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games, or Relay Team skaters that can show a trajectory to finish 4th – 6th in the relay event(s).

LT Athletes who are on trajectory to place in a qualifying placement at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games

500m – Top 16

1000m Top 16

1500m – Top 16

3000m – Top 16 (ladies only)

5000m- Top 16 (men only)

5000m – One of the top 12 Qualifiers to the WSD (reserve added at the WSD do not qualify)

10000m – One of the top 12 Qualifiers to the WSD (reserve added at the WSD do not qualify)
Mass Start – Not eligible for Tier 3 funding

Or a top (3) Team USA Pursuit skater as long as the trajectory of the team is a to 4th - 6th finish in the Team Pursuit event(s)

USS FUNDING TIER 4 VARIABLE AMOUNT:

Potential Athlete Stipends for athletes who were considered to be prevented from qualifying for Tiers 1 - 3 due to injury, extraordinary circumstances, or various COVID-19 situations. COVID-19 situations may include but are not limited to such things as a positive test, being quarantined or not attending the qualifying event due to feeling unsafe.

Athletes identified to the Review Panel for Tier 4 consideration may be awarded an Athlete Stipend. The Review Panel will review situations and will evaluate what funding may be awarded. The Panel may allocate a specific tier of support or a separate funding amount as determined by the Review Panel.

Long Track and Short Track athletes in Tier 4 may be reviewed differently. Long Track skaters contested the World Championship in 2020 while the Short Track World Championships were cancelled, and thus retroactive results were used to allocate Short Track Athlete stipends for the 2020-21 season.

Additionally, consideration for Tier 4 may be given to LT athletes in the Mass Start who provided agreed upon team support to a medal contending teammate.

USS EMERGING ELITE

There may be funding consideration for emerging athletes that relocate to Salt Lake City (SLC) to train with the NTP. These skaters typically:

- Must be qualified and invited to train with the NTP and accept their full-time invitation to train in SLC.
- Traditionally be one of the following:
 - ISU Junior aged skater that had Junior World success and/or are beginning a pathway with an elite performance trajectory.
 - Neo-Senior skaters (up to 2 years post Junior) that are identified as having an elite trajectory through objective data.
 - Transition athletes that have shown through objective data that they are worthy of support based on their trajectory with international progression.

Emerging elite athletes may be added to the Athlete Stipend program during the season as determined by USS HP staff and the USOPC.

CONDITIONS OF FUNDING:

To encourage advancement and to receive continued support throughout the Olympic quadrennial cycles, athletes will need to demonstrate progression through the Tier system. Tiers will be based upon performance at the most recent Long Track Single Distance World Championships, Short Track World Championships, or the Olympic Games in the Olympic season.

- An athlete may be carried in Tier 1 or 2 indefinitely.
- An athlete may only be carried as an individual or by means of a team member in Tier 3 for a maximum of four years.

ATHLETE STIPEND BASE ATHLETE SUPPORT:

The actual funding amount per tier are subject to USOPC annual support funding approval which should be confirmed by June 30th prior to the 2021-22 season. The Athlete Stipend amounts for the 2021-22 Season will be reviewed and determined by the Review Panel.

A portion of the Athlete Stipend funding for Tier 1 - 4 athletes is for the purpose of a living stipend to assist with expenses for athlete residing in SLC and training in the NTP full-time. The amount of \$500 per month is identified within the Athlete Stipend funding and will be withheld from an athlete's monthly funding if they are not in SLC with the NTP full-time.

DISTRIBUTION TO ATHLETE:

Athlete Stipend recipients are qualified for on an annual basis however, all recipient stipends are reviewed quarterly with the athlete's performance to ensure they are on track with achieving success in 2022.

Various Athlete Stipend support is combined into a single payment, paid over a 9-month period from July 1st through March 1st of each season upon continued qualification. Payments should be received by the 5th of every month.

If at any time, athletes are not perceived to be committed to a training environment, the athlete will be notified by USS HP staff and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the circumstances and establish a reasonable timeline to ensure the athlete remains on track for achieving success at the 2022 Winter Olympic Games. Should the agreed upon benchmarks not be met, within the agreed upon time frame, the athlete will be notified, and Athlete Stipend support may be stopped by USS staff in consultation with the USOPC Winter Sport Team.

Athletes that do not qualify for the Olympic Winter Games will have their payments stopped one month after the completion of the Olympic Trials.